Brooklyn, Jan. 17, 1836.

Rev. Samuel J. May:

My Dear Friend — My regret in not being able to attend the fourth annual meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, is equal to the intense interest which I feel in its deliberations.

Let me say to the brethren who shall assemble together — Be bold for God. These are times in which we are specially called upon not to count our lives dear unto us — if, living, we are to be slaves ourselves, or to wink at the enslavement of others. Nay, we shall be unworthy of an existence, if we suffer ourselves to be awed into silence by the threats of oppressors. The cause which we advocate is not ours, but God's; and therefore I renew the charge — Be bold for God. Nevertheless, it is ours to carry forward, instrumentally — but not ours to choose or reject, as we may think expedient. Those who call upon us to suspend our operations, or to keep silence, or to wait till a more convenient season, or to stop our ears and steel our hearts to the cries of our bleeding countrymen, make application to the wrong source. They ought to beseech the Creator of heaven and earth to release us from our obligations to himself and to mankind; to reverse or repeal all the laws of his moral government; to transform us into stocks and stones; to make the slaves in reality, what they are deemed by human enactments, goods and chattels, implements of husbandry, and four-footed beasts; to ordain that henceforth rebellion shall be loyalty — sin, righteousness — and the cruel despotism of American slaveholders, the glorious liberty of the sons of God! In all rationality, too, they ought to petition the great Lawgiver to repeal every injunction of holy writ like the following: — "Thou shalt not steal" — "Thou shalt not covet any thing that is thy neighbor's" — "Love thy neighbor as thyself" — "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" — "Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways" — "Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them" — "Undo the heavy burdens, let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke" — "Deliver him that is spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor" — "Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction." O foolish and insane men! thus

to consider obedience to God as something that policy may properly defer, or expediency lawfully annul! By ceasing to be men, shall we be independent of the Almighty? By setting up our authority in opposition to his own, shall we not be destroyed?

So, too, those who think they shall destroy our cause, if they can destroy a few of its prominent advocates — how wild and impious is their delusion! "The battle is the Lord's" — not ours. Why, then, do they not attempt to scale the battlements of heaven, that they may dethrone Him who is higher than the highest, and thus end the great controversy, not only in this nation, but in all nations — not only at the present period, but through all time? It is true, those battlements are high; but our enemies have "sought out many inventions" — they are skilful, ingenious, adventurous — and, seemingly, confident of victory. It is true, he whom they must encounter and vanquish is "Jehovah of hosts" — "King of kings, and Lord of lords" — "God over all" — "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy" — "the Lord Almighty," "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance" — "all nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." But our enemies are valiant men — ambitious of great achievements — omniputent in their own strength — having much property in "slaves and the souls of men" — lifted up above all that is called God! — Ah! proud boasters, do ye grow pale, and shudder, and turn away, in view of such a fearful contest? Do ye remember the fate of Pharaoh and his hosts? of Babylon, and Tyre, and Sidon? of Sodom and Gomorrah? of an antediluvian world? — Truly, ye do well to retreat from the Majesty of Him, at whose presence it is declared, — "the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place: his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. He sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them."

O ye flagitious oppressors, ye do well to remember that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." But will ye aim at no higher victims than Arthur Tappan, George Thompson, and William Lloyd Garrison? And who and what are they? Three drops from a boundless ocean — three rays from a noonday sun — three particles of dust floating in a limitless atmosphere — nothing, subtracted from infinite fulness. Should ye succeed in destroying them, the mighty difficulty still remains. Still He liveth who saith, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." Still He reigneth, who "executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed." Still He is faithful and true who declares, "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him." Still He is omnipotent who proclaims, "Therefore thus saith the Lord; ye have not hearkened unto me, in proclaiming liberty, every one to his brother, and every man to his neighbor: behold I proclaim a liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine." O, then, destroy not yourselves nor your country; but take from the midst of you the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and draw out your soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; ~~and your~~ bring the poor that are cast out to ~~thy~~ your house, and cover their nakedness, and hide not yourselves from your own flesh; — then shall your light rise in obscurity, and your darkness be as the noonday. And they that shall be of you shall build the old waste places; ye shall raise up the foundation of many generations; and ye shall be called, The repairers of the breach, The restorers of paths to dwell in. "For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

It is indeed a mighty conflict, my dear brother, through which we are called to pass, and we shall assuredly be overcome, unless we are sustained by the energy of a divine love, and impressed with a fear of God that shall make all other fears contemptible. Remember that, but a little while since, we had to commence the work of converting the entire nation, (so thoroughly had slavery corrupted it,) beginning at Boston, as did the apostles at Jerusalem. Surprisingly has the truth made progress, and multitudinous are the converts to it. Still, though much has been done, more remains to be accomplished. The church is yet stained with "the blood of the souls of the poor innocents" — it is

yet the hiding-place and sanctuary of the ruthless monster that feeds upon human flesh, and battens upon human agony and degradation. The decidedly pro-slavery tone of a large majority of our newspapers; the numerous public meetings that have been held in all parts of the free States, unanimously coinciding with the corrupt sentiments of the south; the slavish language uttered in every hall of legislation; the despotic recommendations of certain Governors in their recent messages, particularly of Gov. Marcy of New-York; the indifference, nay, the positive approbation with which propositions are received by the people, to destroy the liberty of speech and of the press, and annul the right of petitioning government, that protection and perpetuity may be given to slavery; the attitude assumed in Congress, by northern and southern representatives, respecting the abolition of slavery and the slave trade in the District of Columbia; the sanction given to the robbery and censorship of the mail; the impunity with which some of our northern citizens, convicted of no crime, have been seized at the south, and without a legal trial, publicly lacerated, or cast into prison, or ignominiously put to death; the rewards offered by the south for the abduction of certain freemen of the north; the demand of southern executives upon our own, to deliver over the same individuals to a ~~sound~~ more fate; the proposition of the south to the north, to imprison, or put to death "without benefit of clergy," all of us who shall dare to hint that slavery is inconsistent with humanity, justice and religion; or who shall refuse to subscribe to the monstrous dogma, ~~doctrine~~, that "domestic slavery is the corner-stone of our republican edifice"; the countenance which is given to mobs against the friends of emancipation, by men of high standing, both in Church and State; the impious justification of slavery by the southern clergy and churches; the general insensibility or perverseness of religious newspapers and periodicals; the unanimous declaration of southern oppressors that they will never consent to the emancipation of their slaves, either immediately or ultimately, either for union or money, either for God or man; the dangers and difficulties which attend all our public attempts to plead the cause of our fettered, bleeding, guiltless countrymen; the brand of fanaticism, or treason, or robbery, which is put upon all the commandments and precepts of the bible, and upon the plainest maxims of republicanism: — these and other indications of the ferocious attachment of the people to the system of slavery, and to the company of slaveholders, portend that we are engaged in one of the mightiest moral struggles which the world has ever witnessed, and show how necessary it is that we all should have the endurance of the man of Uz, the faith of Gideon, the meekness of Moses, and the intrepidity of the youthful David.

But I must pause. Brother, "cease from man"; beware of a worldly policy; do not compromise principle; fasten yourselves to the throne of God; and lean upon the arm of Omnipotence. Let your doings be characterised by the loftiness of christian independence, and by the compassion of the Son of God. In your prayers, your resolutions, your speeches, make mention of our brethren George Thompson and Charles Stuart, and of all our brethren in England — and, above all things, fail not now and at all times to Be Bold for God.

Yours, with brotherly affection,

Wm. Lloyd Garrison.